DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 442 699 SO 031 682

AUTHOR	Hobbs-Olson, Laurie
TITLE	Life on an Island: Early Settlers off the Rock Bound Coast of Maine. Teaching with Historic Places.
INSTITUTION	National Register of Historic Places, Washington, DC. Interagency Resources Div.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	27p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Teaching with Historic Places, National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, NW, Suite NC400, Washington, DC 20240. For full text: http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Field Trips; Historic Sites; *Land Settlement; *Local History; Primary Sources; Secondary Education; Social Studies; Student Educational Objectives; *United States History
IDENTIFIERS	Acadia National Park ME; *Maine; National Register of Historic Places

ABSTRACT

This lesson, based on National Register of Historic Places files, describes early settlers' lives on some of the approximately 5,000 islands off the coast of Maine. During the mid-18th century many of these islands began to be inhabited by settlers eager to take advantage of this interface between land and sea. The lesson discusses the Blue Duck Ships' Store and the Islesford Historical Museum, both located on Little Cranberry Island, two-and-one-half miles by boat from Mount Desert Island, and both part of Acadia National Park. The lesson could be used in units on the settlement of northern New England or on life in the early national period. It can help students strengthen their skills of observation, research, and analysis of a variety of sources. The lesson provides background information about the site and lists objectives for students and materials needed. The unit is divided into these sections: "Locating the Site: Maps" (Maine; Mount Desert and neighboring islands); "Determining the Facts: Readings" (The Hadlocks, a Seafaring Family of Maine; Samuel Hadlock VI's Ledger [with transcript]; Edwin Hadlock's Journal [with transcript]; The Gilleys of Baker Island; The Lighthouse Letter); "Visual Evidence: Images" (Little Cranberry Island, 1870; Little Cranberry Island, 1880s); "Putting It All Together: Activities" (Living on an Island; Local History); and "Supplementary Resources." (BT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 442 699

Teaching with Historic Places

Life on an Island: Early Settlers off the Rock Bound Coast of Maine

Teaching with Historic Places
National Register of Historic Places
National Park Service
1849 C. Street, N.W., Suite NC400
Washington, D.C. 20240

SO 031 682

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

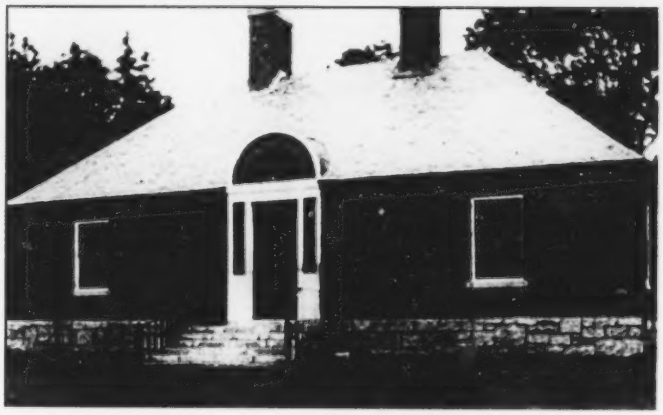
http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/twhp/www!ps/lessons/16acadia/16acadia.htm

2000

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Life on an Island: Early Settlers off the Rock Bound Coast of Maine

Off the jagged, rocky coast of Maine lie approximately 5,000 islands ranging in size from ledge outcroppings to the 80,000 acre Mount Desert Island. During the mid 18th century many of these islands began to be inhabited by settlers eager to take advantage of this interface between land and sea.



(Islesford Historical Museum, 1969, Acadia National Park)

Living on an island was not easy, however. The granite islands have a very thin layer of topsoil that is usually highly acidic due to the spruce spruce forests dominating the coastal vegetation. Weather conditions are harsh. Summers are often cool with periods of fog and rain, and winters--although milder along the coast than inland --bring pounding storms with 60-mile-per-hour winds and waves 20 to 25 feet high. Since all trading, freight-shipping, and transportation was by water, such conditions could isolate islanders for long periods of time.

(The Blue Duck, 1916, Acadia National Park)

On a calm day, the two-and-one-half-mile boat trip from Mount Desert Island to Little Cranberry Island takes approximately 20 minutes. As the boat winds through the fishing boats in the protected harbor and approaches the dock, two buildings command the eye's attention. The Blue Duck Ships' Store is a one-and-one-half story, gabled, wooden structure standing where the island meets the harbor. Directly behind the Blue Duck is the Islesford Historical Museum, a one-and-one-half story brick Georgian Revival building. These two buildings, part of Acadia

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

National Park, preserve the memory of those who lived on the Cranberry Isles. Within the museum are family memorabilia, tools, and the tales of everyday life that speak of independence and self-reliance.

This lesson is based on the Islesford Historical Museum and the Blue Duck Ships' Store, two of more than 71,000 properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About This Lesson

Setting the Stage: Historical Context

Locating the Site: Maps

1. Maine
2. Mount Desert and neighboring islands

Determining the Facts: Readings

1. The Hadlocks, A Seafaring Family of Maine
2. Samuel Hadlock VI's Ledger (with transcript)
3. Edwin Hadlock's Journal (with transcript)
4. The Gilleys of Baker Island
5. The Lighthouse Letter

Visual Evidence: Images

1. Little Cranberry Island, 1870
2. Little Cranberry Island, 1880s

Putting It All Together: Activities

1. Living on an Island
2. Local History

Supplementary Resources

About This Lesson

This lesson is based on the National Register of Historic Places registration files, "Islesford Historical Museum" and "Blue Duck Ships' Store," and other sources. It was written by Laurie Hobbs-Olson, former Environmental Education Coordinator for Acadia National Park.

Where it fits into the curriculum

Topics: The lesson could be used in units on the settlement of northern New England or on life in the early national period. Students will strengthen their skills of observation, research, and analysis of a variety of sources.

Time period: 19th Century

Objectives for students

1) To list three reasons why it is important to remember the ways of life of everyday people.

2) To name and describe three different occupations associated with northern coastal life.

3) To describe the influence of the Maine coastal environment on island populations by explaining its impact on two families.

4) To explain why island settlement was more desirable than mainland settlement for many people.

5) To list reasons why the preservation of local history is important to a community and to the nation.

Materials for students

The materials listed below either can be used directly on the computer or can be printed out, photocopied, and distributed to students.

1) two maps showing Maine and Mount Desert and its neighboring islands;

2) three readings compiled to demonstrate the lives of two island families;

3) two documents of Hadlock family records;

4) two photographs of Little Cranberry Island in 1870 and the 1880s.

Visiting the site

The Blue Duck and the Islesford Historical Museum are located in Islesford, a waterfront community on Little Cranberry Island. Administered by the National Park Service as part of Acadia National Park, the museum may be visited daily from mid-June to late September by commercial passenger ferries which provide regular service from Mount Desert Island. Museum hours vary according to the boat schedule. Admission is free. To reach the ferry, follow Maine Route 3 or 198 to Northeast Harbor. For additional information write to the Superintendent, Acadia National Park, Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609 or visit the park web pages at http://www.nps.gov/acad/

Setting the Stage

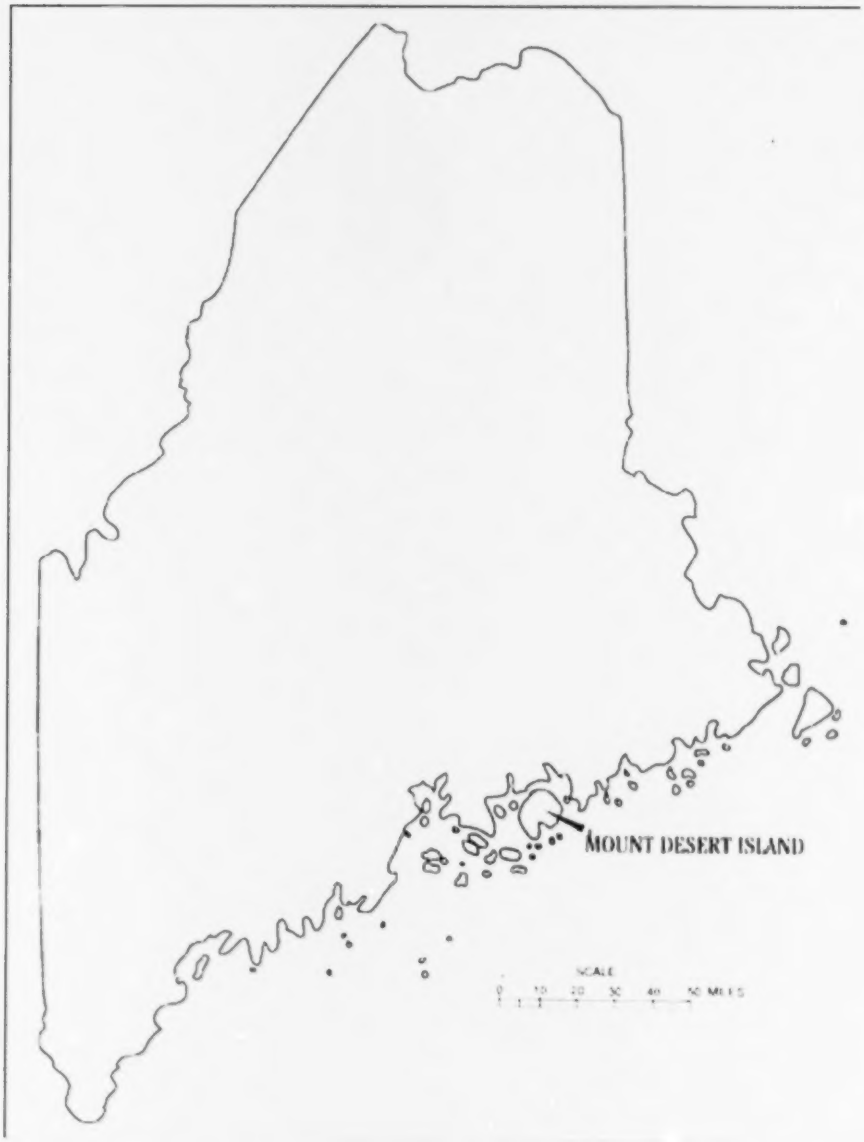
Despite hardships, at the time of early settlement in the 18th century the islands off the coast of Maine were more coveted than the mainland. Islands were easier to hold against attack and they provided their own boundary for keeping livestock--fencing was seldom needed. Island living also was convenient for the many people who made their living by the sea.

Edwin Hadlock, a local entrepreneur who lived on Little Cranberry Island, built the structure known today as the Blue Duck about 1850. He and his sons Gilbert and William used it as a ships' store for at least 25 years. The Blue Duck is an unadorned wood frame structure that represents a simple building style common to maritime villages in the 19th century. After 1875, it operated as a general store. About 1918, Doctor William Otis Sawtelle, a college professor, purchased the building. Sawtelle gave the store its current name, the Blue Duck, after discovering many duck decoys stored there. He painted the decoys Prussian blue and scattered them around the property.

As a summer resident, Doctor Sawtelle became interested in the history of maritime New England, especially Little Cranberry Island, and formed the Islesford Historical Society. By 1919, the Blue Duck was used to exhibit various historical objects and memorabilia collected by the Society. It soon became apparent that the ever expanding and valuable collection required a permanent home. By 1927, under Sawtelle's leadership, friends of the Society contributed sufficient funds to erect a slate roofed brick and granite building--the Islesford Historical Museum.

The Islesford Historical Museum collection preserves both documents and artifacts. Name boards for tall ships, lifesaving gear salvaged from shipwrecks, tools, instruments, and locally-built ship models identify a seafaring people. Wind-up clocks, a candlestick stand, china, and pewter housewares suggest the affluence of some of the inhabitants. Well-designed furniture such as a cradle, a china cabinet, and an assortment of elegant chairs signify an island people who appreciated beauty. Needlework, a cooper's bench, farming tools, and fishing gear bear witness to generations of independent and self-sustaining Americans. In 1948, the museum and the Blue Duck became part of Acadia National Park.

Locating the Site
Map 1: Maine



The coastline of Maine is known as a drowned coast, caused by the retreat of the last glacier approximately 13,000 years ago. The islands off the coast would have been hilltops on the mainland at one time.

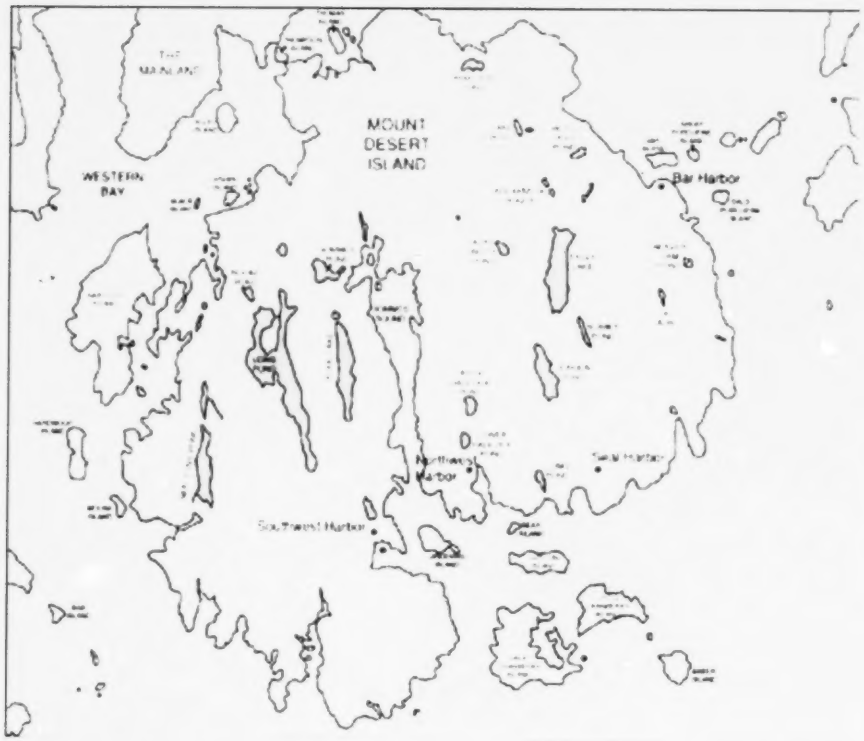
Questions for Map 1

1. How would you describe the coastline?

2. How do you think people would have lived along the Maine coast in the 1800s? How might they have made a living? What would they have worried about? Would you have wanted to live on the islands? Why or why not?

3. Locate Mount Desert Island. How does the size of this island compare with the rest of the islands off the coast?

Locating the Site
Map 2: Mount Desert and neighboring islands



Little Cranberry Island is part of a larger community known as the Town of the Cranberry Isles, consisting of five islands.

Questions for Map 2

1. Locate Little Cranberry Island.

2. What nearby islands do you think make up the Town of Cranberry Isles?

3. Why do you think the islands wanted to join together politically to act as a single town?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Determining the Facts

Reading 1: The Hadlocks: A Seafaring Family of Maine

Samuel Hadlock V, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, moved to Mount Desert Island in 1785 and settled at Manchester Point near Northeast Harbor. His son, Samuel Hadlock VI (1770-1854), moved across the harbor to Little Cranberry Island in 1791, where he acquired a large part of the island property and was instrumental in establishing the waterfront settlement now called Islesford. In 1808 Samuel Hadlock VI built a ships' store, one of the first commercial waterfront buildings in Islesford. By 1850, his son Edwin had built another ships' store, the building now known as the Blue Duck.

In 1807, Samuel Hadlock VI took a cargo of fish caught on the Grand Banks, Newfoundland to Oporto, Portugal, in the 131 ton schooner Ocean. At that time, because of the Napoleonic Wars, foodstuffs in neutral countries were scarce and high-priced. Rather than bring his cargo of fish home to cure as was customary, Hadlock split and dried them on the rocks at Labrador, Newfoundland. He then sailed for Portugal and made his port despite the attempt by British and French warships to stop all American vessels engaged in the trans-Atlantic carrying trade. Hadlock made his way back to Marblehead, Massachusetts after selling his fish and purchasing goods in England to stock the store he was planning to build. The Custom House records at Marblehead state that he paid duties of more than $500 on what he brought back to this country in lemons, salt, etc.

With a portion of the proceeds from this voyage of the Ocean, Hadlock built a store at the head of the present coal wharf on Little Cranberry Island. Here he carried on an extensive business, sometimes leasing the outfit to Symers and Eaton of Boston who traded extensively in fish.

Hadlock built many vessels, some of which were commanded by his sons. All but one of his five sons died or were lost at sea. His oldest son, Samuel, master of the ill-fated Minerva, was lost with all hands "at the ice" in 1829. Elijah, master of the brig Beaver, died on board of yellow fever the year before. Epps, master of the schooner Otter, and his brother Gilbert were lost with all hands in the West Indies in 1831.

In 1848, several years before Samuel Hadlock VI died, the schooner Samuel Hadlock, was built on Little Cranberry Island. The largest vessel constructed in the Mount Desert region, this vessel was commanded by Edwin Hadlock, Samuel Hadlock's only surviving son. Edwin barely escaped a similar fate on a voyage from Tampico, Mexico, to New York in the spring of 1849, which took almost two months. Baffled by head winds and heavy seas, with men growing weaker and weaker and with hope almost gone, Edwin could record in the log, "Still a head wind and heavy seas. On allowance of one quart of water and one pound of bread per man. And so ends the twenty four hours on

allowance and no tobacco. Providence doeth what seemed right in His sight."

Questions for Reading 1

1. What were the Hadlocks' occupations?

2. Why was a trip across the Atlantic an arduous affair? Was it worthwhile?

3. Using maps of North America and Europe, try to retrace Samuel Hadlock VI's 1807 voyage by locating the places mentioned.

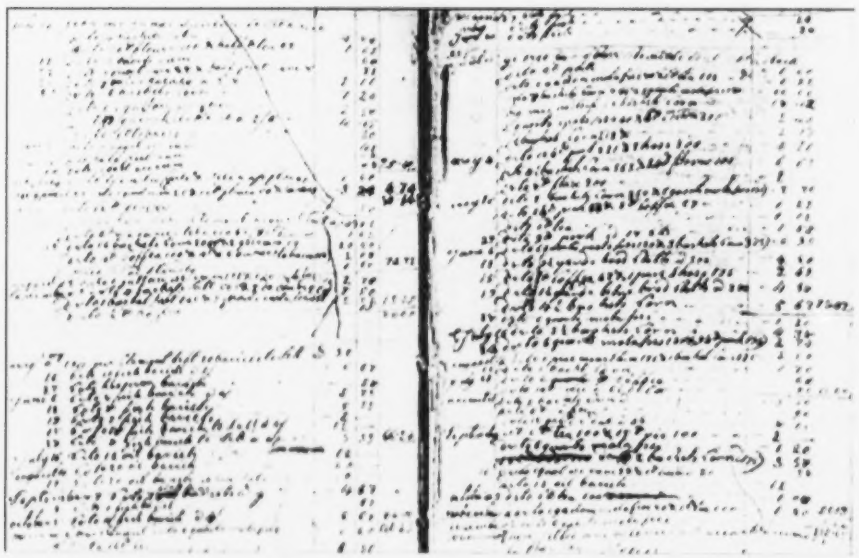
4. How do you think the Hadlocks' life differed from that of people who settled on the mainland?

5. What might have been the feelings of Edwin Hadlock during his voyage on the Samuel Hadlock? Why was his ship given that name?

6. Using a map of North America, locate the starting point and destination of Edwin Hadlock's voyage. Next, indicate the general region where Epps and Gilbert died on their voyage.

Reading 1 was adapted from Mrs. Seth S. Thornton, Traditions and Records of Southwest Harbor and Somesville: Mount Desert Island, Maine(Auburn, ME: Merrill and Webber Company, 1938).

Determining the Facts
Document 1: Samuel Hadlock VI's Ledger, 1809-1812



(Acadia National Park)

Document 1, an excerpt from Samuel Hadlock VI's ledger, itemizes goods sold in his store on Little Cranberry Island.

A transcript of Document 1 is provided to help answer the questions below.

Questions for Document 1

1. What three items did Hadlock sell most frequently?

2. Compare your family's shopping list to the ledger. What things are similar and what is different? Why do you think there is little variety of products listed on the ledger?

3. In what months did Hadlock do most of his business? Why do you think his business was not as brisk in January or February?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

July 14 1809	Mr. James Spurling to S. Hadlock	
	Cr[edit] to 4 bushels corn	4.80
	Crto 14 lb. flower & half lb. tea	1.63
17	Crto 2 qts. rum	.50
22	Crto 1 qt. rum & half pint rum	.33
25	Crto 7 yards kalako [calico]	3.11
27	Crto 6 bushels corn	7.20
	Crto 1 1/2 gallon rum	2.50
	Crto —yards kalako	4.45
	Crto 1 lb. tobacco	.30
Aug.	Crto 1 quart rum	.42
Oct. 16	Crto half pint rum	.08
14	Crto gallon rum	.08
		25.40
1810 July	Crto————	1.50
1811 April 29	Crto 1 qt. rum & 12 lb. flower	3.24
		4.74
		30.14
May 1	Crto 12 lb. flower	.50
June 18 1812	Mr. John Clement account brot up	49.03
	Crto 8 ounces tobacco & 1 lb. tea	1.62
19	Crto 16 bushels corn & 2 qts. rum	20.50
	Crto 4 lb. coffee & 5 ounces tobacco	2.08
	—Wm. Stanley	1.50
		74.73
Aug. 12	Crto 1 gallon rum————	2.70
Sept. 3	Crto 4 bushels salt & bacon	7.50
	Crto 1 bushel salt & 7 qts. molasses	2.92
	Crto 1/2 lb coffee	.15
		13.27
		88.00
May 4 1811	Mr. Clement left 30 bariels to sell	$30.00
16	Crto 10 fish bariels [barrels]	6.67
27	Crto kooperon [coopering?] bariels	.58
June 6	Crto 8 fish bariels	5.33
12	Crto 8 fish bariels	5.33
13	Crto 3 fish bariels	2.00
15	Crto 18 fish bariels to sell	12.00
28	Crto 8 fish bariels to sell	5.33
		66.24
July 16	Crto 12 oil bariels	12.00
Aug. 4	Crto 20 oil bariels	20.00
17	Crto 20 oil bariels when sold	20.00
Sept. 6	Crto 7 fish bariels	4.67
9	Crto 1 fish bariel	.67
Oct. 5	Crto 10 fish bariels	6.67
		64.01
		130.25

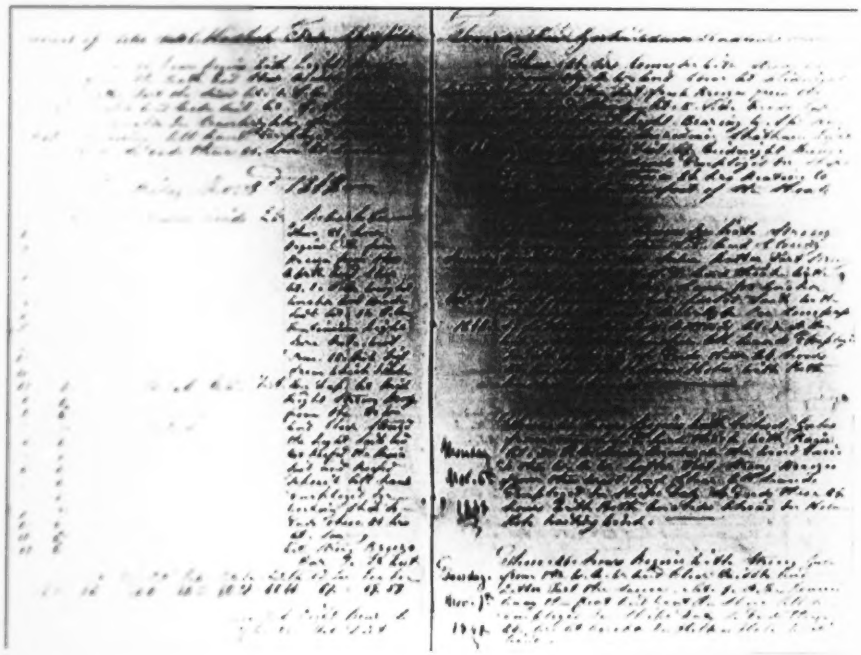
Nov. 2	Mr. Clement crto 6 qts. molasses	1.20
	Crto 4 1 1/2 lb.tea	1.50
1812 Jan. 3	Crto 2 quentels [quintals] seal fish	5.00
30	Crto 3 lb. cotton	.75
Feb. 10	Crto 3 bushels corn	4.50
1811 April 29	Crto fish	5.93
May	Crto fish	.20
June 20	Crto fish	.30
April 13 1811	Mr. John Clement to S. Hadlock	
	Crto 9 lb. pork	1.50
	Crto 1 gallon molasses & 1 lb. tea	1.92
	Crto 7 bushels corn & 7 qts. molasses	10.15
	Crto by mis hadlock 18 bushels corn	18.42
	Crto 2 qts. molasses & 6 lb. cotton	2.40
	Crto 1 1/2 bushel corn	2.13
May 4	Crto 13 1/4 lb. pork & shoes	4.21
	Crto 4 1/2 bushels corn & 24 lb. flower	6.63
	Crto 8 lb. flax	2.00
May 16	Crto 2 bushels corn & 6 quarts molasses	3.70
	Crto 3 1/4 lb. pork & 2 lb. coffee	1.22
	Crto 1 lb.tea	1.12
27	Crto 9 lb. pork	1.53
June 6	Crto 6 quarts molasses & 3 bushels corn	4.95
12	Crto 1 1/2 yards brod clothe [broadcloth]	4.50
15	Crto 2 lb. coffee & 1 pare shoes	2.42
19	Crto 1 1/2 yards blue brod clothe	4.50
	Crto 4 1/2 bushels corn	5.63
		78.92
28	Crto 6 qts. molasses	1.20
July 16	Crto 3 1/2 bushels corn	4.38
24	Crto 6 quarts molasses & 9 1/4 lb. pork	2.74
Aug. 4	Crto 1 pare mens shoes & 1 bushel corn	3.50
12	Crto 1 bushel corn	1.75
July 27	Crto 2 lb. coffee	.60
Aug. 17	Crto 2 bushels corn	3.50
	Crto 3 lb. coffee	.90
	Crto 15 yards————	8.75
Sept. 7	Crto 1 lb. tea————	2.00
	Crto 6 quarts molasses	1.20
	Crto 2 bushels corn	3.50
11	Crto 1 qt. rum & 1 lb. butter	.38
	Crto 12 oil barrels	12.00
Oct. 5	Crto 1 lb. tea	1.00
Nov. 4	Crto 1 gallon molasses 1 lb. tea	1.80
		35.03
Dec. 2	Crto 6 quarts molasses	1.22
		130.25

1811 December then settled and balanced all accounts and demands to this day

John Clement
Sam Hadlock

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Determining the Facts
Document 2: Edwin Hadlock's Journal



(Acadia National Park)

Document 2, an excerpt from Edwin Hadlock's journal, was written while he was captaining the schooner Samuel Hadlock.

A transcript of Document 2 is provided to help answer the questions below.

Questions for Document 2

1. Using a dictionary, write down the definitions of the nautical terms in the journal entry that are unfamiliar to you.

2. Why might shipmasters have kept daily journals?

3. What were the general weather conditions over the six days recorded in the journal?

4. What do you think life was like on a 19th-century schooner or ship? How might that compare with life on a ship today?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Thursday, Nov. 2, 1848
These 24 hours begins with light breezes from the north and clear. Middle and latter part the same. At 1 PM weighed anchor and made sail. At 9 PM came to anchor in Cranberry Isles for water and provisions. All hands employed in ships duty. So ends these 24 hours at anchor.

Remarks on Friday, Nov. 3, 1848
These 24 hours begins with fine breezes from the North and clear. At 1 PM weighed anchor and made sail. At 11 PM Matinicus Light bore north 1/2 west true 15 miles distance from which I [take?] my dep.[arture]. At midnight strong breezes from the NW and clear. Stowed the light sails and two reefed the main sail and reefed top sail. All hands employed in working ship. So ends these 24 hours at sea with strong breezes.

Saturday, Nov. 4, 1848
These 24 hours comes in with strong breezes from the NW and clear. At midnight calm. Latter part, fresh breezes from SE and cloudy. At 5 PM made Cape Cod Highland light bearing WSW true 14 miles distance. At Meridian Chatham light NNW 8 miles distance. At midnight made all sail. All hands employed in ships duty. So ends these 24 hours beating to windward on the foot of the shoals.

Sunday, Nov. 5, 1848
These 24 hours comes in with strong breezes from the SE and cloudy. Middle part the same. Latter part strong gales from the SSE and thick with rain. At 8 PM came too [sic] anchor in Holmes Hole and furled sails with the light bearing NW by N per compass. Four fathoms muddy bottom. At 7AM let go the sheet anchor. All hands employed in ships duty. So ends these 24 hours at anchor in Holmes Hole with both anchors ahead.

Monday Nov. 6, 1848
These 24 hours begins with violent gales from the SSE and thick with rain. At 5PM more moderate the wind veered to the WNW. Latter part strong breezes from the west and clear. All hands employed in ships duty. So ends these 24 hours with both anchors ahead in Holmes Hole waiting wind.

Tuesday Nov. 7, 1848
These 24 hours begins with strong gales from the WNW and clear. Middle and latter part the same. At 9 AM lowered away the boat and went on shore. All hands employed in ships duty. So ends these 24 hours at anchor in Holmes Hole waiting wind.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Determining the Facts
Reading 2: The Gilleys of Baker Island

About the year 1806, William Gilley and Hannah Lurvey Gilley decided to move their family from Norwood's Cove on Mount Desert Island to Baker Island. Until then, Gilley had made his living chiefly on fishing or coastal vessels, but--like most young men of the region--he also cut wood and farmed. Gilley and his wife had already accumulated a little store of household goods and implements, and tools for fishing and farming. They needed no money to buy Baker Island, for it lay unoccupied and unclaimed; they simply took possession of it.

William Gilley was a large, strong man, six feet tall, and weighing more than 200 pounds. Hannah Gilley was a robust woman, who had lived in Newburyport and Byfield, Massachusetts until she was 13 years old, and had had much better schooling than that available on the island of Mount Desert. She taught all her children reading, writing, and arithmetic; and all her life she valued good reading, and encouraged it in her family.

For William Gilley, taking possession of Baker Island involved much heavy labor, but few unaccustomed risks. Hannah, who already had three little children, would face a formidable isolation, and also share in the severe labors of a pioneering family. Even to get a footing and to build the first shelter on this wooded island was no easy task. However, health, strength, and fortitude were theirs; and in a few years they had established themselves comfortably on the island. Ultimately they had six sons and six daughters, all of whom grew to maturity. Nine of the twelve children married, and to them were born 58 children.

After 10 years, the family had transformed the island into a tolerable farm. William Gilley kept about six cows, a yoke of oxen, two or three young cattle, about 50 sheep, and three or four hogs. The girls tended the poultry, made butter and spun wool, while the boys helped their father. They had cleared a considerable portion of the island, broken up the cleared land, hauled off part of the stones and piled them on the protruding ledges, and gradually made fields for grass and other farm crops.

Food at the island was abundant. No traps were needed for lobsters, which could be picked up in the shallow water along the rocky shore. Fresh fish were readily available except in stormy weather and in cold and windy February and March. Although codfish were easily accessible, the family preferred mackerel. In the summer, the family could eat lamb and in the fall they killed from 10 to 15 sheep. When the weather turned cold, they killed a "beef critter" or two, and sea-birds also added to their store of food. During the summer and early autumn the family had plenty of fresh vegetables.

For clothing the family depended mostly on wool from their own sheep. There were spinning wheels and looms in the house, and Hannah both spun and wove. They raised flax from which they made a coarse kind of linen, chiefly for towels, but they had very

little cotton. The children went barefoot most of the year; but in the winter they wore shoes or boots made by the eldest brother, who had learned the shoemaker's art.

The Gilleys did need cash on occasion. Some essentials had to be bought at the Southwest Harbor store, a seven mile trip by boat each way. To get money, they could sell or exchange butter and eggs at the store. They also could sell dried fish and feathers in Boston. The boys shot enough birds in a single year to yield more than a hundredweight of feathers, worth 50 cents a pound. The feathers shipped to Boston every year represented the men's labor, whereas the butter and eggs represented chiefly the women's labor. Butter, which sold in the vicinity at twelve-and-a-half cents per pound, was by far the best of the cash resources. The Gilleys were also able to supplement their income by keeping the Baker Island lighthouse after being appointed in 1828.

In this large and united family the boys stayed at home and worked for their parents until they were 21 years of age, and the girls stayed at home until they were married or had come of age. It was not all work for the family, however. In the long winter evenings the family played checkers, or fox and geese. The mother read to the family until the children grew old enough to take their turn in reading aloud. As soon as they were 10 or 12 years of age, the boys were in and out of boats much of the time, attaining that quick, instinctive use of oar, sail, and tiller necessary for safety. When they grew older they had the sport of gunning. Nearly every Sunday in the summer Hannah took the eldest children 14 miles round-trip, in an open boat, to the Congregational Church at Southwest Harbor.

The Gilleys always had before them nature's splendor. From their dwelling they could see the entire hemisphere of the sky. To the north lay the grand hills of Mount Desert, with an outline clear and sharp when the northwest wind blew, but dim and soft when southerly winds prevailed. Every storm dashed a magnificent surf onto the rockbound isle. In winter, the low sun made the sea a sheet of shimmering silver; and all the year an endless variety of colors, shades and textures played over the surfaces of hills and sea.

Persons without the habit of reflection are often but half conscious of their delight in such visions, but find them to be a real source of happiness that is soon missed when gone. On the whole, the members of that isolated family look back on their childhood as a happy one, and feel a strong sense of obligation to their mother and father.

The Family of William, Jr. and Hannah (Boynton) Gilley

William Gilley, Jr., b. 11 September 1782 Mount Desert, Me., d. 17 September 1872 Baker's Island, Me., m. 30 November 1802 Hannah Boynton Lurvey, b. 8 December 1782 Byfield, Mass., d. 24 March 1852 Little Cranberry Isle, Maine.

Children:

1. Hannah b. 18 September 1803, m. Joseph Stanley.
2. William III b. 8 July 1805, d. 1894, m. 1) Clarissa Lancaster, 2) Phebe Douglas.
3. Elisha B. b. 12 September 1807, d. 28 July 1901, m. Hannah Manchester Stanley.
4. Eunice b. 1809, d. 1871, m. Elisha Crane.
5. Francis b. 6 June 1810, d. 19 November 1877, m. Bethsheba Crane.
6. Joseph b. 22 May 1813, d. 10 July 1894, m. Adeline Dolliver.
7. Samuel b. 15 May 1815, d. 27 May 1906, m. Emily Stanley
8. Matilda b. 5 October 1817, m. Oliver L. Allen.
9. Lucinda b. 29 December 1819, d. 18 February 1843, never married.
10. John b. 22 February 1822, d. 12 October 1896, m. 1) Harriet Bickford Wilkinson, 2) Mary Jane Wilkinson.
11. Mary b. 5 March 1824, never married.
12. Elmira b. 26 November 1826, d. 1853, never married.

Questions for Reading 2

1. How did the Gilleys obtain Baker Island? Would they be able to obtain land the same way today? Why or why not?

2. How did they use the resources of the island to support themselves?

3. In what ways was Baker Island an advantageous place to live? What inconveniences did the family have to contend with?

4. Describe Hannah Gilley's life on Baker Island. List five activities that would have been part of her weekly routine.

5. Develop a family tree for the Gilleys. Do you know any families as large as the Gilleys? Why was it considered a blessing to have such a large family?

6. This account of the Gilley's experiences was written nearly a century after they settled on Baker Island. In what ways might the narrator have romanticized their experiences? Do you think the description of their lives is realistic? Why or why not?

Reading 2 was compiled and adapted from George E. Street, Mount Desert: A History (Cambridge: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Riverside Press, 1905); and historical records at Acadia National Park.

Determining the Facts
Reading 3: The Lighthouse Letter

Following is a copy of the letter William Gilley received appointing him keeper of the newly built lighthouse on Baker Island.

Collectors Office
District of Portland and
Falmouth
June 19, 1828

I have the pleasure to inform you that the President has appointed you to be keeper of the light house on Bakers Island, near Mount Desert, with a salary fixed at three hundred and fifty dollars per annum.

It will be necessary for you to reside and be steadily in the house provided for the keeper.

Major Cornelius Grinnell will furnish the establishment with oil, tube-glasses, wicks, buff skins and whiting; and when the buildings are finished and the light house fitted up and furnished, you will have the light house lit up during the nights. Further instructions in relation to your duties with the forms of accounts and returns will be sent you as soon as they can be prepared.

W, lesley the agent will deliver over to you the buildings and appurtenances, for which you will give him your receipt. Please to acknowledge your acceptance of the appointment, and inform me of the night you intend first to light up the lantern.

I am respectfully,
Your obedient servant
Issac lesley
Superintendent of Light Houses in Maine

Mr. William Gilley
Keeper of Light House
Bakers Island

Questions for Reading 3

1. Describe what life might be like for a lighthouse keeper in the past and today. Do you think this position changed life for the Gilleys on Baker Island? If so, how?

2. Why were lighthouses necessary to coastal islands? Are they still necessary today?

Reading 3 was provided courtesy of Acadia National Park.

Visual Evidence
Photo 1: Little Cranberry Island in 1870: The Blue Duck (left center with end chimney) and original Samuel Hadlock store (center).

(From tintype by Mr. Bragg. Acadia National Park)

Photo 2: Little Cranberry Island in the 1880s: original Samuel Hadlock store (left) and the Blue Duck (right).

(By B.T. Williston. Acadia National Park)

Questions for Photos 1 & 2

1. Describe each photograph and list the possible occupations of people who lived on the island.

2. In what ways would the scenes have been alike or different at the time the Hadlocks and the Gilleys lived in the region? Would the occupations of the people be likely to be the same? Do the photos show activities similar to those described in the readings?

3. In what ways would the scenes be different today? What would cause such changes over time? Describe why it is important to preserve evidence of the everyday life in the past.

Putting It All Together

The following activities will help students to appreciate the experience of living on Little Cranberry Island and Baker Island, and to compare that way of life to the experiences of early settlers in their own community.

Activity 1: Living on an Island

Divide the class into two groups--one representing the Hadlocks and the other the Gilleys. Have each group list the advantages of their way of life. Then have each group elect a spokesperson that you, as a visiting journalist, will interview. Some questions you might ask include: As islanders, how isolated do you feel? What is appealing about your island--to adults and to children? What hardships do you face? Do you enjoy the way you have to make a living? What do you do for fun?

After each group has made a case for island living, have the groups research everyday life in the early 1800s for people living in their own community or region. Then ask one group to describe the similarities of life in their community to the life of the Hadlocks and the Gilleys, while the other group should point out differences.

Activity 2: Local History

Have students create their own (temporary) historical museum. They can prepare documents by writing short accounts of their own family history or that of neighbors who have lived in the community for a long time. After choosing aspects of life that they think are important to remember, they can collect family papers and artifacts that represent those aspects and develop a one-day exhibit. Consider asking local history societies and people knowledgeable about the local community to collaborate on the project. Ask students to list local historic buildings and vote on which one might be an appropriate home for a community museum. Students might invite other classes, their parents and others to view the completed exhibit.

Explain to students that individual family histories combine to make local history and local histories are part of our national heritage. Ask students to write about their current lives or a current issue as if they were writing in 2050. How will what is happening now look as history? Remind students that today's events and lives are the history of the future.

Life on an Island: Early Settlers Off the Rock Bound Coast of Maine-- Supplementary Resources

By looking at Life on an Island: Early Settlers Off the Rock-Bound Coast of Maine, students can more easily appreciate the experience of living on Little Cranberry Island and Baker Island, and compare that way of life to experiences in their own community. Those interested in learning more will find that the Internet offers a variety of materials.

Acadia National Park http://www.nps.gov/acad/

Acadia National Park is a unit of the National Park System. The park's Web page details the history of the park and visitation information. Included on the site are photographs, environmental education, a naturalist journal, and much more. A comprehensive bibliography is available on the Environmental Education page with such subjects as island life, maritime history, and the history of the Cranberry Isles and Maine. Also provided are suggestions for student literature.

The Cranberry Isles, Maine http://www.cranberryisles.com/

The Cranberry Isles Web pages offer a wealth of information on the islands including information about the Gilleys of Baker Island, Life on Baker Island, the history of Cranberry Isles including early settlement with an account of the Hadlock family, and much more.

Lighthouse Resources:

National Park Service http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/maritime/

The National Park Service's National Maritime Initiative specializes in preserving America's maritime heritage. Included on their Web site is information about Baker Island Light, and text from Lighthouse Keepers in the Nineteenth Century that summarizes the experiences of keepers very much like William Gilley.
http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/maritime/park/bakerisl.htm
http://www.cr.nps.gov/maritime/keep/keep19th.htm

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore http://www.nps.gov/apis/home.htm

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore is a unit of the National Park System. The park's Web pages offer an on-line visitor center that provides several unique perspectives on island living. Browse through the Apostle Islands Scrapbook for stories from the area's history, including an account titled "I Hate Lighthouses!," detailing what life was like for wives and children of lighthouse keepers. Also learn about life at a lighthouse one hundred years ago in the Sand Island Keeper's Log.

Pigeon Point Lighthouse State Historic Park
http://www.pigeonpointlighthouse.org/vtt_intro.htm

Pigeon Point Lighthouse State Historic Park is a unit of the California State Park System. The park created a Virtual Tower Tour of Pigeon Point Lighthouse detailing how a light station was ran in the 19th century.

Maritime Resources:

The Mariners' Museum http://www.mariner.org/

The Mariners' Museum in Newport News, VA features several on-line exhibits dealing with a variety of different maritime subjects including lighthouses and keepers.

National Maritime Museum Association
http://www.maritime.org/nmmaedu2-lesson.htm

The National Maritime Museum Association features a history of the schooner, C.A. Thayer. Included in the history are facts about different commercial uses of schooners, living conditions on board, nautical terms, maritime terminology, and more.